

**Island County Board of Health
Regular Meeting - Monday, October 15, 2012
Minutes**

DUE TO THE UNAVAILABILITY OF RECORDING EQUIPMENT FOR TODAY'S MEETING, MINUTES ARE IN HARD COPY FORMAT ONLY. THERE IS NO AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS MEETING.

Members Present: Commissioners Angie Homola, Helen Price Johnson and Kelly Emerson; Anne Tarrant, Whidbey General Hospital Commissioner; Scott Dudley, Mayor of Oak Harbor; and, Roger S. Case, MD, Executive Secretary to the Board.

Members Absent: Captain Edward Simmer, MC, USN, Ex-Officio Member.

Call to Order: Chair Angie Homola called this Regular Meeting of the Island County Board of Health to order at 1:15 p.m.

Additions or Changes to the Agenda: There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes: The Chair called for the approval of the minutes of the September 17, 2012 Regular Meeting. Member Anne Tarrant moved for approval of the minutes as presented. Mayor Scott Dudley seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Public Input or Comments: The Chair invited members of the public who wished to provide input or make comments to indicate their wish to do so. No one asked to address the Board.

Presentation: Whidbey General Hospital and Our Community: Mr. Tom Tomasino, Chief Executive Officer of the Whidbey Island Public Hospital District since 2008, introduced himself to the Board. Whidbey General Hospital (WGH) is owned and operated by the citizens of Whidbey Island through the Whidbey Island Public Hospital District. Oversight of Whidbey General Hospital, its rural health clinics and various physician practices is provided by an elected 5-member Board of Commissioners. The District's staff includes 70 primary care practitioners and specialists, approximately 200 Registered/Licensed nurses, approximately 450 technicians, pharmacists, professional & support staff, and over 120 active volunteers, with the mission of: "One Team, One Purpose: Caring for You." Whidbey General Hospital is the 2nd largest employer on Whidbey Island with 690 employees. The District provides comprehensive services to Whidbey Island which includes emergency room visits, diagnostic imaging, laboratory testing, inpatient stays, surgical procedures and RHC visits.

In an overview, Mr. Tomasino compared the 2011 and 2012 expenses and revenues and concluded with what he sees as Whidbey General Hospital's challenges: meeting the community needs, aging buildings and infrastructure, competition, technology advances, physician recruitment and retention, and financial well being of the organization. Whidbey General Hospital Commissioner Anne Tarrant commented that the amount of charity care that Whidbey General Hospital will assume is an expected \$4-\$5 Million this year. Commissioner Emerson asked how the hospital will fare with predicted Medicare reductions? Mr. Tomasino responded that WGH's critical access hospital designation allows rural hospitals to bill the actual cost of services plus 1% so, under the current rule, WGH will not be impacted by the Medicare reductions. Whidbey General Hospital is among 32 critical access care hospital in Washington State.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Price Johnson, Mr. Tomasino explained how the hospital's EMS and the fire district's EMS systems work together through the 911-system in partnership. Commissioner Price Johnson asked if Whidbey General Hospital was looking for operating partners? Mr. Tomasino said that they are not but many potential partners are looking at them due to the district's financial health. Commissioner Price Johnson commented on the lack of crisis mental health care and asked what Island County could do better in this area? Mr. Tomasino responded that there needed to be more communication within the County for solutions. System wide, mental health options are very underfunded in Washington State. In response to a question from Commissioner Price Johnson on the South Whidbey facility, Mr. Tomasino advised that the prior strategic plan was to build a new south end facility. There is not sufficient funding for a new building so the district has completely rehabbed the existing building.

Contracts: Keith Higman presented contracts to the Board for their consideration.

1. Skagit Valley College – Skagit/Islands Head Start Consultation
Contract No. HD-21-12
Contract Amount: \$ 1,500 (Not to exceed)
2. University of San Francisco – Nursing Practicum Facility
Contract No. HD-22-12
Contract Amount: \$ -0-
3. Whatcom County – Community Transformation Grant
Contract No. HS070112
Contract Amount: \$ 30,000

Commissioner Price Johnson moved that the group of contracts be approved as presented.
Commissioner Emerson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Legislative Updates: Keith Higman advised that this is just a place holder on today's agenda since the legislature is not in session but asked the Board to instruct him in what they want watched. Mr. Tomasino suggested that the Board might want to watch the legislation that might change or remove the rural hospital designation which is so important to Whidbey General Hospital's financial well being. Commissioner Price Johnson advised that she will be the legislative steering committee representative this year. She suggested that Keith start with a list of what might be considered and the Board can review that list. Keith will provide that information at next month's Board of Health meeting.

Health Department Report: Suzanne Turner, Community & Family Health Director, introduced Colleen Keefe, RN who will be working in the Early Intervention and Early Family Support Service programs. Keith Higman advised the Board that an investigation in Clark County had identified 23 laboratory confirmed cases of salmonella in customers and food handlers of a Vancouver restaurant. Over 271 cases of fungal meningitis associated with a commercial pharmaceutical product have been identified in 16 states and 21 deaths. Washington received product from the company but none of the product implicated in causing this illness. A novel influenza virus has been identified that has been transmitted by direct contact with pigs and can mutate quickly in the general population. Island County Public Health has made a decision not to hold flu immunization clinics and to allow the private sector to fill that role.

Board Comments/Announcements: There were no additional announcements.

Adjourn: There being no further business before the Board, Chair Angie Homola adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Health will be as a Regular Session held on Monday, November 19, 2012 at 1:15 p.m. in the Commissioner's Hearing Room (B102) in the Court House Annex Building.

Submitted: _____
Roger S. Case, MD
Executive Secretary to the Board

Minutes approved this ____ day of _____ 2012
ISLAND COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

Angie Homola, Board Chair